

1811, for the Pacific ocean, reached the Arikara village on the 13th day of June, where meeting with some American hunters who had been the preceding year on the waters of the Columbia with Mr. Henry, and who, giving such an account of the route by which they passed, as being far preferable in point of procuring with facility an abundant supply of food at all times, as well as avoiding even the probability of seeing their enemies the Black Feet, than by the track of captains Lewis & Clark; the gentlemen of the expedition at once abandoned their former ideas of passing by the falls of the Missouri, and made the necessary arrangements for commencing their journey over land from this place.

Eighty horses were purchased and equipped by the 17th of July, and on the day following they departed from the Arikaras, 60 persons in number, all on foot except the partners of the company. In this situation they proceeded for five days, having crossed in that time two considerable streams which joined the Missouri below the Arikaras, when finding an inland tribe of Indians calling themselves Shawhays, but known among the whites by the appellations of Chiennes, we procured from these people an accession of 40 horses, which enabled the gentlemen to furnish a horse for every two men. Steering about W. S. W. they passed the small branches of Big river, the Little Missouri above its forks, and several of the tributary streams of Powder river, one of which they followed up, they found a band of the Absaroka or Crow nation, encamped on its banks, at the foot of the Big Horn mountain.

For ammunition and some small articles, they exchanged all their lame for sound horses with these savages; but although that this band has been allowed by every one who knew them, to be by far the best behaved of their tribe, it was only by that unalterable determination of the gentlemen to avoid jeopardizing the safety of the party without at the same moment submitting to intentional insults, that they left this camp (not possessing a greater force than the whites) without coming to blows.

The distance from the Arikaras to this mountain, is about 450 miles over an extremely rugged tract, by no means furnishing a sufficient supply of water; but during the 28 days they